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Triangle (2009 British film)

Triangle is a 2009 psychological horror film written and directed by Christopher Smith and starring Melissa George, Michael Dorman, Rachael Carpani, Henry Nixon, Emma Lung, and Liam Hemsworth. George portrays a single mother who goes on a boating trip with several friends. When they are forced to abandon their ship, they board a derelict ocean liner, where they become convinced that someone is stalking them.

A British-Australian co-production, the film was financed by UK Film Council that awarded £1.6 million ($2.8 million) of public money from the National Lottery fund towards the development, production and distribution of the film. The film was based in part on the story of Sisyphus, the Greek mythological figure cursed to repeatedly push a boulder up a hill without ever successfully reaching the top. Smith also was inspired by *Dead of Night* (1945) and *Memento* (2000). He wanted to make a circular film that explored déjà vu, while avoiding reusing elements of *Jacob's Ladder* (1990). The film was shot on sets and on location in Queensland, Australia. Smith insisted on having a set constructed that depicted the exterior of a cruise liner, in order to minimize shooting in front of green screens.

Triangle premiered at the London FrightFest Film Festival on 27 August 2009, and was released theatrically in the UK on 16 October 2009.[4] The film received generally positive reviews from film critics and grossed $1.3–1.6 million worldwide.

Triangle

Theatrical poster

Directed by	Christopher Smith
Written by	Christopher Smith
Produced by	Jason Newmark Julie Baines Chris Brown
Starring	Melissa George Michael Dorman Rachael Carpani Henry Nixon Emma Lung Liam Hemsworth
Cinematography	Robert Humphreys
Edited by	Stuart Gazzard
Music by	Christian Henson
Production companies	UK Film Council Dan Films (UK)
Distributed by	Icon Film Distribution[1]
Release date	16 October 2009[1]

Plot

Jess prepares to take Tommy, her autistic son, on a boat trip with her friend Greg. She hears the doorbell ring, but no one is there. Jess drives to a Florida harbor without Tommy, explaining that he is at school, and boards Greg's boat with his deckhand Victor, his married friends Sally and Downey, and Sally's friend

Heather. At sea, a storm approaches, and while Greg radios the Coast Guard, he picks up a distress signal from a woman pleading for help. She says that someone is killing everyone but is cut off before she can provide her location. The sudden storm capsizes the boat and Heather is swept away. The others climb onto the overturned boat when the storm clears.

Running time	99 minutes[1]
Countries	United Kingdom Australia
Language	English
Budget	$12 million[2]
Box office	$1.3–1.6 million[3][2]

The five survivors board an ocean liner as it passes. It appears to be deserted even though they saw the silhouette of a person aboard. Jess experiences a sense of déjà vu as they explore the ship. They find Jess's keys near a display case for Aeolus, the ship's namesake, and fresh food in the dining room. Jess spots someone watching them and Victor gives chase. She and Greg find the words "go to theater" written in blood on a mirror, but Greg insists the crew must be playing a prank. Jess returns to the dining room, where the food is now rotting. Victor, covered in blood, tries to strangle Jess, but she fights him off and he collapses with a severe head wound.

Jess hears gunfire and follows it to the ship's theater, where Greg lies dead of a gunshot. Sally and Downey say that Greg told them Jess shot him. A shooter masked in burlap kills them and chases Jess; she arms herself with an ax and disarms the shooter, who tells her "You have to kill them; it's the only way to get home" before Jess knocks her overboard.

Jess hears yelling and sees Greg's capsized boat and its five survivors, who spot her as the earlier unidentified figure. This second set of passengers boards the ship. Jess is spotted after she drops her keys near the display case, and she attempts to warn the second Victor when he chases her, only to accidentally impale his head on a wall hook. She finds dozens of her own lockets and notes in her own handwriting telling her to kill them all. She takes a shotgun and confronts the second group, intending to "change the pattern", but a third Jess, repeating the loop, kills the second Greg and Downey and severely wounds the second Sally.

The first Jess chases the second Sally, who sends the distress signal heard on Greg's boat. Jess catches up to her on a deck filled with dozens of Sally's corpses, and Sally succumbs to her wound as, below them, the second Jess kills the third Jess. The overturned boat returns again with another set of survivors, and Jess realizes the loop restarts once everyone is killed. Desperate to stop the loop, Jess sets the first loop into motion by writing on the mirror in blood, dumping bodies overboard, and telling Sally and Downey to go to the theater. She then arms herself, dresses in the shooter's outfit, and cloaks her face in burlap. After she kills the others and is disarmed, she urges her counterpart to kill everyone before being knocked overboard.

She awakens, having washed ashore, and discovers that it is the same morning. She returns home and watches from outside her house as her earlier self yells abusively and strikes Tommy out of frustration with his autism. She distracts her counterpart with the doorbell, then kills her, puts the bagged body in the car trunk, and leaves with Tommy, vowing to him that things will change. A seagull hits their windshield and dies, but when she picks it up and disposes of it, she sees a pile of dead seagulls. Realizing she is still trapped in the loop, Jess hurriedly drives away, but crashes into a truck. Tommy is killed, and the double of Jess from the trunk is seen dead. Jess stands watching the accident scene. A taxi driver approaches and Jess asks to go to the harbour. She joins the others on Greg's boat, starting the loop again, evidently hoping to bring back her son.

Cast

- Melissa George as Jess
- Michael Dorman as Greg
- Rachael Carpani as Sally
- Henry Nixon as Downey
- Emma Lung as Heather
- Liam Hemsworth as Victor
- Joshua McIvor as Tommy
- Bryan Probets as Cab Driver

Production

A British-Australian co-production, Triangle was partly financed by the U.K. Film Council, which contributed £1.6 million of public money from the National Lottery fund towards the development, production and distribution of the film. The production team consisted of Jason Newmark and Julie Baines from Dan Films-UK and Chris Brown from Pictures in Paradise. Icon Entertainment handled international distribution.[5]

Smith was inspired by *Dead of Night* and *Memento*. He said:

> "I wanted to make a cyclical film that explored Déjà vu avoiding using the same elements seen in *Jacob's Ladder*."

The film was filmed on sets and on location in Queensland, Australia; The sets include the exterior of a cruise ship, which Smith insisted on building as he considered it important not to overuse the use of green screens.[4] The film is based in part on the story of Sisyphus, a figure from Greek mythology cursed to repeatedly push a boulder up a hill without ever successfully reaching the top.[6]

Although set in the American city of Miami, Florida, it was filmed in Brisbane and the Gold Coast, in the Australian state of Queensland, with a cast of mostly Australian actors. The writer-director wanted to maintain the link and, to do so, baptized the housing estate where Jess lives "Sunshine State", a nickname used by locals to refer to Queensland.

As for the auditions, the director has revealed that he chose Melissa George for the lead role after seeing her in the television series *In Treatment*, where she plays a young woman who feels a deep attraction for her psychotherapist. The role of Victor was assigned to the Australian actor Liam Hemsworth, this film being his second foray into film, despite having up to that point a longer resume as an actor in television series, rising to fame after this by joining the cast of films such as *The Last Song*, or the saga of *The Hunger Games*.

To edit the sequence in which the camera passes through the mirror "following" the actress, Smith acknowledged having been inspired by one of the final shots of *The Woman in the Window*, by Fritz Lang.

Release

Triangle premiered at the London FrightFest Film Festival on 27 August 2009. It was released theatrically in the UK on 16 October 2009,[7] in Belgium on 30 December 2009,[8] and in the Netherlands on 21 January 2010.[9]

The movie grossed $894,985 in the UK, and $1,303,598 total worldwide.[3] It did not receive a theatrical release in the US.

Home media

Icon Home Entertainment released *Triangle* on DVD and Blu-ray in the UK on 1 March 2010, with features including a commentary track by director Smith.[10] First Look Studios distributed the film on DVD and Blu-ray in the US, releasing it on 2 February 2010. The American discs do not include the commentary track, nor some of the other extras on the British releases.[11]

Reception

Rotten Tomatoes, a review aggregator, reports an approval rating of 79% based on 38 reviews, with an average rating of 6.53/10. The site's critics' consensus reads: "*Triangle* sails into some strange waters, but this intelligent, well-acted horror outing anchors its idiosyncrasies in a satisfyingly scary story."[12]

Empire gave the film a 4/5 stars rating and called it a "satisfying mind-twister, with an unexpectedly poignant pay-off".[13] *Variety* said that *Triangle* only makes some kind of sense on its own fantastic level.[14] *Time Out London* reviewer Nigel Floyd praised George's "fearless, credible performance" that "grounds the madness in a moving emotional reality".[15] *The Guardian* critic, Philip French compared it to a "Möbius strip" in which the viewer "wonders how Smith will keep things going" and added the viewer will "leave his picture suitably shaken".[16] Fellow *Guardian* critic Peter Bradshaw wrote that *Triangle* is a "smart, interestingly constructed scary movie", complimenting Smith for "creating some real shivers".[17]

Entertainment.ie's Mike Sheridan was less impressed. Although he praised George's acting, he wrote that her performance "can't shield the fact that this still an exceptionally non-scary horror, that will have you scratching your head more than jumping out of your seat", ultimately rating it 2/5 stars.[18] *The Scotsman* called it "a trickily plotted and slickly made effort that nevertheless can't quite make its premise fly in gripping enough fashion".[19]

See also

- *Death Ship*
- List of films featuring time loops

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External links

- *Triangle* (https://www.imdb.com/title/tt1187064/) at IMDb
- *Triangle* (https://www.rottentomatoes.com/m/1212111-triangle) at Rotten Tomatoes

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